



PRESS RELEASE

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About IATP

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy works locally and globally at the intersection of policy and practice to ensure fair and sustainable food, farm and trade systems. IATP is headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota with an office in Washington D.C.

Change in grain policy signals China's intent to boost meat production

New research highlights global implications for food safety, food security and natural resources

WASHINGTON, D.C. – China's announcement last week to relinquish its historic grain self-sufficiency policy signals a major boost to the country's meat, dairy and feed sectors as Chinese companies go global. China's transition to an industrial, resource-intensive model of livestock production could have major implications around the world, impacting farmers, public health and the environment, according to a new series of reports from the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP).

The series, *Global Meat Complex: The China Series*, looks in depth at China's feed, pork, poultry and dairy sectors, the past and future trajectory of the industry, and global impacts of the government's efforts to balance between grain self-sufficiency and the desire to provide cheap meat.

"The decision last week signals a clear intent by the Chinese government to facilitate more and cheaper imports of corn, wheat and other grains for its meat industry," said IATP's Director of Agricultural Commodities and Globalization, Shefali Sharma. "Combined with last year's Smithfield acquisition, China has become a critical actor in the global industrial meat complex, a move that carries significant weight for global grain and meat production."

As land, rural labor and water shortages become acute in China, Chinese policymakers have been grappling over meat versus feed imports. However, the move also means that China's ongoing struggle with food safety—be it melamine, bird flu or land and water pollution due to animal waste—may be exacerbated as China's meat industry scales up.

"It's ironic that as China industrializes its production model with an aim toward improving food safety, the U.S. experience has shown the opposite," continued Sharma. "Issues ranging from large-scale contamination, antibiotic resistance and environmental hazards are a constant struggle. Not to mention the extreme stress on increasingly scarce land and water resources around the world."

China is the world's largest producer of pork, the second largest producer of poultry, the largest feed importer and the fourth largest dairy producer. IATP's reports analyze the global implications for policy decisions at this scale as well as domestic impacts on China's food supply and economy as small producers can no longer compete with corporate livestock operations.

"Understanding how Chinese companies are 'going out' to develop their supply chains, and how major U.S. and other international livestock and dairy companies are 'going in' to China, better prepares us to address the global nature of this industrial complex and its impacts both domestically and globally," said Sharma.

Download the reports at <http://www.iatp.org/industrial-meat> and find information about recent and upcoming webinars on the topic of meat production in China:

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